

INTRODUCTION OF 50/50 WAIVER FOR THE WELLNESS PLAN

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues from Michigan in sponsoring legislation which will provide an opportunity for The Wellness Plan, a well-established HMO headquartered in Detroit, to enroll Medicare beneficiaries. This plan inadvertently has been frozen out of enrolling Medicare beneficiaries since January 1996 through a health care prepayment plan contract because of a technical change in the Social Security and Technical Corrections Act of 1994.

State-licensed as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit HMO since 1975, and federally qualified since 1979, The Wellness Plan has been recognized as a model quality Medicaid managed care plan by national leaders, including President Bush and two former secretaries of the Department of Health and Human Services. The Wellness Plan is a model of the type of HMO into which our Government would like Medicare beneficiaries enrolled because it has a proven record with both the Medicaid and Medicare Programs. I urge that the House leadership advance this bill in this Congress so that we do not delay any further the enrollment beneficiaries into this plan.

THE GAMES WOMEN WIN

HON. CARDIS COLLINS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I have been watching the 1996 Summer Olympics with a great deal of pride and admiration. I might even say that I have swelled with pride at the marvelous athletic ability demonstrated by all the athletes from the United States. I have almost burst with pride for the women athletes who have risen to the rolls of honor among athletes. We are a little over halfway through the events for these 1996 Summer Olympics and I would like to read the names of the medal-winning women athletes representing the United States through July 30, 1996:

Angel Martino, 2 bronzes; Allison Wagner, silver; Amanda Beard, 2 silvers; Beth Botsford, gold; Whitney Hedgepeth, 2 silvers; Kim Rhode, 2 golds; Amy Van Dyken, 2 golds; Brooke Bennett, gold; Dana Chladek, silver; Mary Ellen Clark, bronze; Gail Devers, gold; Gwen Torrence, bronze; Amy Chow, silver; Shannon Miller, gold; and Dominique Dawes, bronze.

U.S. women's team—swimming: 400-meter freestyle relay, gold; 400-meter medley relay, gold; and 800-meter freestyle relay, gold.

U.S. women's gymnastics team, gold.

U.S. equestrian team—women: Team 3-day event, silver.

Team dressage, bronze.

U.S. women's rowing team—four without coxswain, silver.

Lightweight double sculls, silver.

These medal winners are representative of the women athletes that make up 42.4 percent

of the U.S. competitors at the 1996 Summer Olympics. Imagine 42.4 percent, almost as many women as men competing in the Olympics on U.S. soil. Many of us know that there were fewer events available in which women could participate during most of Olympic history. In fact, until the passage of title IX in 1972, there were fewer women athletes to compete. These 1996 Summer Olympics are a tribute to all the dreams, sweat, and tears of all athletes, their parents, partners, and coaches. I stand today to honor all that these medals represent.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EMPOWERMENT ACT OF 1996

SPEECH OF

HON. LOUIS STOKES

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, August 1, 1996

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 123) to amend title 4, United States Code, to declare English as the official language of the Government of the United States:

Mr. STOKES. Mr. Chairman, I rise today to express my strong opposition to H.R. 123, the English Language Empowerment Act. I am deeply concerned with the impact that this bill would have on the cultural fabric of our Nation.

Mr. Chairman, this bill contains provisions which would not only require Federal documents to be written in English only, but also repeals the current requirement that bilingual ballots be provided in areas with large numbers of non-English-speaking voters. By including this provision, my Republican colleagues are making blatant intrusion into the constitutionally given right to vote.

Mr. Chairman, the proceedings of our legislatures, our courts, our city councils, and the majority of our day-to-day business is conducted in English. Therefore the value of fluency in English is indisputable. Both immigrants and nonimmigrants alike acknowledge the importance of learning the English language. The long waiting lists for English classes at community colleges and adult schools are a testament to this.

Mr. Chairman, instead of isolating immigrants and impeding their integration into society by declaring English as a official language, we should devote our efforts to teaching people English in order for them to become fully participatory members of society. Unfortunately, this bill does nothing to improve immigrants' ability to be educated in the English language. In fact, as Congress pushes to pass this law, it also has slashed essential funding for bilingual education.

Mr. Chairman, the United States has always been a nation which is rich in its blend of cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This bill which seeks to mandate English as an official language misrepresents our Nation's multicultural history by implying that this Nation has always been unilingual in character. Moreover, this legislation fails to recognize the varied needs of our changing population.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to oppose H.R. 123 and support giving immigrants the freedom to communicate in their native language.

RESTORING FAIRNESS TO BARLEY PRODUCERS

HON. EARL POMEROY

OF NORTH DAKOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. POMEROY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce necessary legislation to correct a grave error in the 1996 farm bill. The bill I am introducing today will make good on the promises made to barley producers during the farm bill debate earlier this year. North Dakota barley growers were promised a transition payment of 46 cents per bushel under the production flexibility contracts. From November until April this estimate stood as the payment barley producers expected from participation in the new program. Many made financial and planting plans based on this figure.

Once the new farm bill was signed into law, however, barley producers discovered an error had been made in estimating the payments. Barley producers found they would now be eligible for a 32-cent payment, over a 30-percent decrease from the promised amount, and a much steeper decrease from the estimates promised to producers of other commodities. In my State of North Dakota, the Nation's leading barley producing State, this error will cost farmers \$13 million. Nationwide, this error amounts to over \$30 million in lost income to barley producers.

The bill I am introducing today along with Representatives JOHNSON of South Dakota and WILLIAMS of Montana will increase the amount allotted for barley contract payments by \$35 million. This is the amount necessary to fulfill the promises made and restore equity to barley producers. We do not reduce the amounts available to other commodities through this action. We only increase the amount available to our Nation's barley putting them on even footing with their counterparts who grow other commodities.

The new farm bill promised 7 years of payments in exchange for the elimination of the historical safety net. We are beginning to find out now what those promises were worth. I urge my colleagues to support this measure which forces Congress to make good on its promises to the American barley grower.

EXPLOSIVES FINGERPRINTING ACT

HON. THOMAS J. MANTON

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, August 2, 1996

Mr. MANTON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my sadness and outrage over the bombing at the Centennial Park in Atlanta. My thoughts and prayers are with the families and friends of those injured or killed in the blast.

Living in fear of random acts of terrorism is relatively new for Americans, but sadly, it has become a reality. After a series of terrorist attacks, we can no longer presume our safety is guaranteed.

Mr. Speaker, while comprehensive terrorism legislation has passed Congress and been signed into law by President Clinton, we must take additional steps to prevent future terrorist acts from occurring. In 1993, I introduced the